

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 365
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE POUCH
AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI
AMCONSUL BUKAVU POUCH
CINCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 6194

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, MILI, AO, GG
SUBJECT: MOBUTU'S INTENTIONS CONCERNING ANGOLAN AND UPGRADING
ZAIRIAN ARMED FORCES

REF: A) KINSHASA 6072; B) BRUSSELS 11501; C) 77 KINSHASA 11284

1. SUMMARY: DURING PRESS INTERVIEW REPORTED REFTTEL, PRESIDENT
MOBUTU BRANDISHED ONCE AGAIN THE THREAT OF REARMING ANGOLAN EXILES
WHILE DISMISSING THE POSSIBILITY OF A RECONCILIATION
WITH ANGOLA IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HE ALSO DESCRIBED
PLANS FOR THE CREATION OF NEW "ELITE ZAIRIAN UNITS" TO UPGRADE HIS
ARMED FORCES (FAZ). MOBUTU IS CLEARLY IN NO MOOD TO NEGOTIATE
WITH ANGOLA FROM A POSITION OF WEAKNESS. END SUMMARY.
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2. MOBUTU IS REPORTED TO HAVE STATED IN THE INTERVIEW THAT "EVERYONE
BELIEVES" HE SHOULD ARM AND TRAIN ANGOLAN REFUGEES IN ZAIRE WHO OPPOSE
NETO'S REGIME, THAT HE HAS NOT YET MADE A DECISION, BUT THAT
RECONCILIATION BETWEEN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE TIME,

BEING. WITH REGARD TO HIS OWN ARMED FORCES, HE SAID HE HAS INITIATED EFFORTS TO RAISE "ELITE ZAIRIAN UNITS" TO REPLACE THE FOREIGN TROOPS PRESENTLY IN SHABA. THESE UNITS WILL INCLUDE A 12,000 MAN INFANTRY DIVISION, TO BE TRAINED BY BELGIAN INSTRUCTORS, AND A 3,000 MAN FRENCH-TRAINED AIRBORNE BRIGADE. THE LATTER UNIT WILL INCLUDE THE ZAIRIAN PARATROOPERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE KOLWEZI FIGHTING PLUS TWO NEW BATTALIONS TO BE RAISED AND TRAINED SIMULTANEOUSLY.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MOBUTU'S THREAT TO MOBILIZE ANGOLAN REFUGEES STRIKES US AS ESSENTIALLY BLUSTER, HIS COMMENTS ARE HARDLY CONDUCTIVE TO THE IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH LUANDA WHICH ZAIRE SERIOUSLY NEEDS. FOREIGN PRESS COVERAGE (REF B) WHICH EMPHASIZES THE "RETALIATORY CAPACITY" OF THE PROJECTED FAZ UNITS, ALTHOUGH NOT ECHOED IN THE ZAIRIAN PRESS, MAY HAVE A SIMILAR EFFECT.

4. THE RAISING OF THE TWO NEW AIRBORNE BATTALIONS MENTIONED BY MOBUTU IS SIMPLY AN ACCELERATION OF EXISTING PLANS FOR THE CREATION OF A FRENCH-TRAINED BRIGADE TO ACT AS A RAPID REACTION/INTERVENTION FORCE. MOBUTU'S PLANS FOR A NEW INFANTRY "DIVISION", HOWEVER, ARE A SURPRISE. RECENT FAZ PLANNING (REF C), HAS EMPHASIZED THE CREATION OF MOBILE LIGHT INFANTRY BRIGADES WHICH PRESENT FEWER COMMAND/CONTROL PROBLEMS AND ARE MORE APPROPRIATE TO ZAIRE'S RESOURCES,

CAPABILITIES, AND NEEDS. BASED ON DAO'S CONVERSATIONS WITH BELGIAN AND
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FRENCH ATTACHES, HOWEVER, WE ASSUME THAT MOBUTU IS SIMPLY CALLING THREE OF THE PLANNED LIGHT INFANTRY BRIGADES A /DIVISION" FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES.

5. BELGIAN SOURCE TOLD CZAMISH TRAINING OF ONE LIGHT INFANTRY BRIGADE AT KITONA WITH INCREASED BELGIAN ADVISERS (DRAWN FROM KANANGA) HAS ALREADY COMMENCED.
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